

SN donates computers to local schools

by Mike Grinnell and Grace Janiszewski, Sensors Directorate

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — The Air Force Research Laboratory Sensors Directorate is donating more than 30 pallets of computer components to local schools throughout November and December.

Excess monitors, printers, and CPUs will be used as teaching aids for future engineers.

Computers are replaced routinely in the AFRL science and technology directorates. “To provide the best environment for our scientists to perform innovative research, we must supply them with state-of-the-art tools,” said Donald Hanson, Sensors Directorate director. Computers that are obsolete or unusable by the high-tech science and engineering standards still have much to offer students.

“By donating our surplus components to the schools, we are putting resources back into the community,” said Hanson. “And hopefully also encouraging students towards scientific and engineering careers.”

Wright-Patterson AFB has been donating computer systems to schools for quite some time. “With our status as a Laboratory, we can donate directly to the schools by creating Educational Partnership Agreements, aiding the process from start to finish,” said Leila Oliver, the directorate’s technology transfer officer.

Teachers involved with the program say the computer components are exactly what they need.

“We did not want computers that are ready to use,” said Jack McIntosh, Northridge Local Schools technology director. “By building a system, these future engineers will learn the operation of the machine’s internal parts. This allows students to truly understand how computers work.”

This is one of the reasons the directorate donated the components: to encourage the study of science in the local area, according to Oliver.

Bringing high-tech components into schools is just one part of the equation. The Sensors Directorate will donate more than three pallets of computer components to the YMCA of Greater Dayton After-School Programs.

The YMCA is the largest provider of daycare in the Miami Valley Region, which supports more than 10 active after-school programs for about 500 area school-aged children. More than 40 percent of the children in the YMCA program benefit from some form of financial assistance.

According to Debbie Nerderman, the downtown YMCA facility childcare director, the YMCA knows that through collaborations they can provide the best service possible to our community and this partnership only enforces that stance.

“With the addition of this computer equipment to our existing curriculum, children from all over the Miami Valley Region who may otherwise miss the experience of learning basic computer skills will now have the opportunity to learn these skills and so much more,” said Nerderman. @